



**CITY OF ABERDEEN**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**ANNUAL REPORT 2018**



Rendering of Proposed University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Aberdeen Medical Campus

**This report was prepared by the Aberdeen Planning Commission and the Director of Planning and Community Development for the City of Aberdeen for the period of January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018 and adopted by the Aberdeen Planning Commission on August 14, 2019.**

## **PLANNING COMMISSION**

Mark Schlottman, Chairman  
Dominique Edwards, Vice Chairman  
James Baxendell  
Michael Hiob  
Jason Kolligs  
Terri Preston  
Amy Snyder

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Douglas Kopeck, RLA  
Merrill Messick, AIA  
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Phyllis Grover

## **SENIOR PLANNER**

Gilbert Jones

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT**

Stefani Spector

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**INTRODUCTION**

The Aberdeen Planning Commission was established in conjunction with the first Zoning Ordinance adopted on September 12, 1957. The Planning Commission is responsible for adopting rules of procedure for their meetings and actions; preparing and adopting a Comprehensive Plan; reviewing and recommending for approval preliminary site plans and preliminary and final subdivision plats; recommending changes to zoning boundaries; recommending text amendments to the Development Code; recommending rezonings and annexations; recommending changes to the Subdivision Regulations; recommending changes in land use or development that arise from City, State, or Federal programs or policies; and recommending programs for public structures, improvements, and land acquisitions.

The Planning Commission's Annual Report highlights the major planning, zoning, and development activities that occurred during the 2018 calendar year. This year's Annual Report includes text amendments to the Development Code, building permit activity, and approved site plans and subdivision plats. Each of these initiatives worked towards implementing the State's vision for sustainable communities that protect the natural environment, direct growth, maintain and improve infrastructure, and include citizen participation in the process. Overall, the City did not have any restrictions on development in the designated Priority Funding Area during the 2018 reporting period.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the City of Aberdeen has a population of 15,580, making it the largest municipality by population in Harford County. The City is served by a diverse transportation system including one interstate highway (I-95), one federal highway (US 40) and five state highways (MD 22, MD 132, MD 462, MD 715, and MD 7), MARC commuter rail service, AMTRAK passenger rail service, Harford Transit LINK, and MTA bus service. The City of Aberdeen functions as an independent municipality, providing many public services for its citizens. The City has its own planning and zoning authority, water and sewer services, police department, and public works department. Fire protection service is provided by the Aberdeen Volunteer Fire Department. Harford County Government provides schools, courts, additional police protection, health, recreation, transit links, and other community services.

## **PLANNING IN ABERDEEN**

### **Legal Authority**

The authority to plan for the City's development and to enact and enforce laws relating to land planning and zoning is derived from the Local Government and Land Use Articles of the Annotated Code of Maryland and the City Charter.

Land use planning and regulation in Aberdeen is the responsibility of five official bodies: the City Council, the Department of Planning and Community Development, the Planning Commission, the Board of Appeals, and the Architectural Review Committee. The City Council adopts the Comprehensive Plan, enacts legislation to ensure compliance with the Plan, adopts amendments to the Development Code and the Zoning Map, and funds capital improvements necessary to implement the Plan.

The Department of Planning and Community Development is responsible for the administration of planning and zoning within the City and advises the Planning Commission and the Board of Appeals regarding all zoning cases, annexations, subdivisions, site plans, zoning reclassifications, and Development Code amendments.

The Board of Appeals is comprised of five members and one alternate appointed by the City Council. The Board considers applications for special exceptions, variances, interpretations of the Development Code, and appeals from administrative decisions related to planning and zoning.

The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) is comprised of five members appointed by the City Council. The ARC reviews site, signage, and landscaping plans for development projects located in the two established overlay districts.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION**

The Planning Commission is made up of seven members who are appointed by the City Council for staggered five-year terms. The Commission elects a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson from its membership for terms of one year, with eligibility for re-election. Mr. Mark Schlottman is Chairman and Ms. Dominique Edwards is Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission.

The Commission typically meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., in the City Council Chambers, 60 North Parke Street, Aberdeen. The agenda is posted on the City's website and all meetings are open to the public.

The Commission is directly involved with all phases of the planning process. Certain powers and duties of the Commission are mandated by the Local Government and Land Use Articles of the Annotated Code of Maryland and the Code of the City of Aberdeen.

The Commission is required to file an Annual Report on its activities with the Mayor and Council and the Maryland Secretary of Planning.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIVITIES**

### **Development Code Amendments**

The last major update to the Aberdeen Development Code occurred in 2018.

The Planning Commission reviewed proposed amendments between December 2014 and June 2016. The City Council made additional revisions and the Planning Commission held a second Public Hearing on June 14, 2018 to review the proposed amendments. Twenty-nine additional amendments were made by the City Council; these were reviewed by the Planning Commission and recommendations made accordingly. The updated Development Code was adopted by the City Council in April 2018.

Two minor amendments to the Development Code were reviewed and recommended for approval by the Planning Commission. These amendments included an exception to the maximum height requirements for hospitals and permitting helistops in certain zoning districts. These amendments were adopted by the City Council in September 2018.

### **Subdivision Regulations Updated**

The Aberdeen Subdivision Regulations were adopted in 1977 and no revisions had occurred since their adoption. The Department of Planning and Community Development and Department of Public Works staff reviewed other municipal and county subdivision regulations and formulated the new regulations with concurrence from the City Attorney. The updated Subdivision Regulations were reviewed and recommended for approval by the Planning Commission in April 2018. They were adopted by the City Council in October 2018.

### **2011 Comprehensive Plan Updates**

The Planning Commission and the Department of Planning and Community Development began reviewing a draft of Chapter 3 – Municipal Growth Element. The anticipated completion date of the updates to the Comprehensive Plan is late 2020.

### **Planning Commission Development Reviews**

The Commission conducted regular review of subdivision plats, site plans, and annexation requests. The Commission and staff reviewed these requests and ensured that compliance with the Aberdeen Development Code, Comprehensive Plan, and Subdivision Regulations was achieved. The following development activity was reviewed, and actions noted: (Refer to the Map on Page 8 for the 2018 Development Activity)

1. Review proposed Amendments #1-29 to the Development Code received from the Aberdeen City Council. Action – Planning Commission made recommendations on each amendment to the Development Code.
2. Review Revised Final Subdivision Plat for the Aberdeen Land and Improvement Company of Harford County located off South Rogers Street and Custis Street. Action – Planning Commission recommended approval of the subdivision plat.
3. Review Preliminary Site Plan for a proposed 7,100 square foot day care center located at 115 Custis Street. Action – Planning Commission recommended approval of the preliminary site plan.
4. Review updated draft Subdivision Regulations. Action – Planning Commission recommended approval of the updated Subdivision Regulations.
5. Review Partial Revision to Final Subdivision Plat for Stancill's Middleton Road located at 1021 Middleton Road. Action – Planning Commission recommended approval of the subdivision plat.
6. Review Final Subdivision Plats One and Two for Aberdeen Logistics Center located at 727 Old Philadelphia Road. Action – Planning Commission recommended approval of the subdivision plats.
7. Review Revised Final Subdivision Plat One for Middleton Holdings Property located off Middleton Road and Maryland Route 22. Action – Planning Commission recommended approval of the subdivision plat.
8. Review draft Feasibility Study for the Transit Oriented Development Festival Square Area. No action required.
9. Review Preliminary Subdivision Plat for the resubdivision of Lots 2 and 3, Somody Property, Section 3, located off Beards Hill Road and Paradise Road. Action – Planning Commission recommended approval of the subdivision plat.
10. Review Preliminary Site Plan for Aberdeen Volunteer Fire Department, House 1 renovation and addition located at 21 North Rogers Street. Action – Planning Commission recommended approval of the preliminary site plan.
11. Review Revised Final Subdivision Plat for Aberdeen Volunteer Fire Department located at 21 North Rogers Street. Action – Planning Commission recommended approval of the subdivision plat.
12. Review Final Subdivision Plat for the Somody Property, Section 3, Resubdivision of Lots 2 and 3 located off Beards Hill Road and Paradise Road. Action – Planning Commission recommended approval of the subdivision plat.
13. Review Final Subdivision Plats One – Five for Eagles Rest, Phase Two located off Aldino-Stepney Road. Action – Planning Commission recommended approval of the 58 residential lot subdivision plats.
14. Review Preliminary Site Plan for the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Aberdeen Medical Campus located at Aberdeen Corporate Park. Action – Planning Commission recommended approval of the preliminary site plan.

15. Review Petition for Annexation for the Siebert and Adams Properties, 75± acres located off Gilbert Road. Action – Planning Commission recommended approval of the annexation petition with a zoning of Integrated Business District.

### **Other Planning Staff Work Efforts**

The City was awarded a Transportation Alternatives Program grant in the amount of \$700,000 for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity enhancements at the Aberdeen MARC Train Station. The Department continues to work with the MDOT-MTA staff on improvements to the Aberdeen MARC Train Station and entered into a Memorandum of Understanding pursuant to the Grant Agreement. A Request for Proposal for Architectural and Engineering Services for this project has been completed, with the five proposals received currently under review by the Department and MDOT-MTA staff. Construction of the planned improvements is anticipated for 2020.

### **DEVELOPMENT PATTERN CHANGES IN 2018**

The Planning Commission reviewed a Petition for Annexation for the Siebert and Adams properties located off Gilbert Road containing 75± acres. The proposed annexation area is in the City's Future Growth Planning Area 10 – Gilbert Road as noted in the approved 2011 Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission's favorable recommendation was forwarded to the City Council and is under review at this time.

The City issued the following building permits for new construction in calendar year 2018:

### **NEW BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED - 2018**

<b>Type of Construction</b>	<b>Number Issued</b>	<b>Total Estimated Construction Costs</b>
Residential – Single Family Dwellings	3	\$981,700
Commercial	6	\$8,915,000
Industrial	1	\$12,000,000

All building permits were issued within the corporate limits of Aberdeen, which is a designated Priority Funding Area.

### **ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES ORDINANCE (APFO)**

New residential and non-residential development projects are subject to Chapter 302, Growth Management, in the Code of the City of Aberdeen. The Departments of Planning and Community Development and Public Works completed amendments to this Chapter and the City Council adopted the changes on March 2016. The Growth Management requirements are applicable to school capacity, sewerage, water, and roads.



